



**Walk to Run**  
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## **First Steps toward a Permanent Fitness Plan** by Lynn Gray

- **Make the commitment.** Sign and post a contract in a prominent place: I, \_\_\_\_\_ have decided to begin a walk to run program and complete a \_\_\_\_\_ distance.
  - **Buy quality running shoes.** Get a pair of running shoes, being sure to allow ½ inch between the end of your longest toe and the end of the shoe.
  - **Use the buddy system.** A buddy once or twice a week will help keep you on your fitness plan. Join a club or other activities which help you meet those with similar fitness goals.
  - **Check foot form.** Be sure you land on your heel, roll your foot from heel to toe, then push off forcefully with your toes.
  - **Check your body form.** Chest out and shoulders straight; any slump or rounding of the shoulders and or back creates knee and shin problems. Your core muscles must be made strong to maintain good posture, which means your back muscles must also be strengthened.
  - **Faster, Faster.** Change your slow walk or jog to one which requires quicker steps both with a short range of motion and with a long stride. In each case, this will up your metabolic rate and prevent overuse of the same muscle groups
  - **Change your walk/run areas.** Seek out shaded and safe venues to train on. Make it your goal to have a different place to walk or run each time you venture out.
  - **Practice agility.** Aerobic movement and conditioning in general creates muscles. However, these muscles need to be stretched so range of motion is acquired.
  - **Save money.** Every time you walk, jog, or run your bank account is boosted. On average, inactive Americans spend approximately \$330 a year more on health care expenses than inactive folks.
  - **Arms count.** Use your arms for forward motion. Make them strong by doing forward arm lunges with light hand weights in a stationary position. Think...Karate Kid.
  - **Do an out-back negative split.** Check pacing and your fitness level. Go out one specific distance and time yourself. Turn around and repeat distance but come back a bit faster.
  - **Aim for twenty minutes.** Beginners aim for a 20 min non-stop speed walk or jog, experienced runners aim for a 20 min non-stop “push” - 80% effort.
  - **The hills are alive.** All levels of walkers and runners benefit from hill training; not only in energy expenditure but total muscle and aerobic development is exponentially increased.
  - **Reflect and enjoy.** Both walkers and runners alike should take time to relax during their outing and reflect both on problems at hand and the positive parts of their lives as well.
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